NIMCAST USER'S GUIDE

Distribution Process

The NIMCAST is rolled out through a permission-based system. All users will be invited by the next higher level to complete the assessment. This roll out will reach down to the county and independent city level. County and independent city incident managers distribute invitations to join the system to representatives of disciplines covered by the NIMS. This distribution includes appropriate private-sector and nongovernmental organization representatives. Discipline-specific representatives may also be invited by the county or city incident manager to view the NIMCAST online as "read-only" users (meaning they can view the instrument and all of its functions online, but not fill out the assessment).

Accessing the NIMCAST

To access the NIMCAST, go to http://www.fema.gov/nimcast. Registered users should log in using the login box on the right side of the page, which prompts users to enter their e-mail address and password to access the system.

First-time users will be prompted to enter their temporary password and change it to a permanent password. Note that when changing the password special instructions must be followed which are contained in the Users Guide on page 2.

Submitting the NIMCAST

Step 1. The incident manager should submit a completed version of the NIMCAST instrument by using the "Submit for Rollup" link on the left side of the NIMCAST web page. The instrument will roll up for review utilizing the same channel by which it was rolled out. Users roll up to the next highest level. For instance, counties and independent cities roll up to States, and States then roll up to the Federal Government.

Step 2. At each level of the roll-up process, the NIMCAST must be filled in, until a statewide incident management capability and NIMS compliance can be accurately reflected. The State incident management administrator will submit the State's finalized NIMCAST to the NIMS Integration Center for review.

Navigating the NIMCAST

The following guide provides detailed instructions on using each feature of the NIMCAST, ordered according to how the features appear in the Navigation window once the user has logged in to the tool. Each help topic is indicated by the red highlighted section of the depicted Navigation toolbar. The user's guide will maximize the benefit of the NIMCAST as both a capability assessment and a resource tool.

About NIMCAST

This page provides an overview of the tool, background on its development, a list of governing authorities, and the purpose of the NIMCAST. This page can be accessed prior to logging in or once you have entered the site as a user.

National Incident Management Capability Assessment Support Tool - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File   Edit   View   Favorites   Tools   Help

Back   Search   Favorites   Media

Address http://www.beta.fema.gov/nimcast/About.do;jsessionid=BB61FB32C620FE638E8C9C38424FF635   Go   Links »

FEMA   The NIMS Integration Center

National Incident Management Capability Assessment Support Tool

NIMCAST

Navigation
About NIMCAST
Welcome
Demo Assessment

Resources
NIMCAST User's Guide [pdf]
NIMCAST Acronyms
NIMCAST Glossary
Assessment [pdf]

Preparedness
NIMS Fact Sheet
NIMS Document [pdf]

NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Search
Search FEMA.gov
Go
» Search Tips

About NIMCAST

Questions/Comments

The National Incident Management System Capability Assessment Support Tool (NIMCAST) is a self-assessment instrument for State, local, tribal, and private-sector and nongovernmental organizations to evaluate their jurisdiction's ability to effectively prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) and, by extension, the NIMCAST are designed to enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive system for incident management.

Background

In Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, *Management of Domestic Incidents*, the President directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and administer a unified, national system for managing incidents. The NIMS provides a consistent Nationwide approach for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

The NIMS incorporates the best practices currently in use by incident managers at all levels and represents a core set of doctrine, concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes to enable effective, efficient, and collaborative incident management at all levels. HSPD-5 requires all Federal Departments and agencies to adopt the NIMS and to use it in their individual domestic incident management and emergency prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation programs and activities, as well as in support of those actions taken to assist State, local, or tribal entities.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate developed the NIMCAST to contribute to the establishment of a national baseline for compliance by all State, local, and tribal jurisdictions with the NIMS. It will also include readiness metrics and elements that support the national preparedness goal, including standards for preparedness assessments and strategies and a system for assessing the Nation's overall preparedness to respond to major events, especially those involving acts of terrorism.

HSPD-8, *National Preparedness*, provides that the primary mechanism for delivery of Federal preparedness assistance will be awards to the States. Federal preparedness assistance will support State and local entities' efforts, including planning, training, exercises, interoperability, and equipment acquisition for major events as well as building capacity for prevention activities such as information gathering, detection, deterrence, and collaboration related to terrorist attacks.

Authorities

- Homeland Security Act of 2002.
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD-5, *Management of Domestic Incidents*.
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD-8, *National Preparedness*.
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS), *National Incident Management System*, March 1, 2004.

Why Do We Need a Self-Assessment?

Jurisdictions at all levels of government, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations must implement the requirements established in the NIMS in order to apply this comprehensive national approach. The NIMCAST assists in that compliance by allowing incident and resource managers to assess their current capabilities and determine what additional actions and resources are needed to effectively participate in the NIMS.

Additionally, HSPD-5 requires Federal Departments and agencies to make adoption of the NIMS by State and local organizations a condition for Federal preparedness assistance. The NIMCAST will facilitate the adoption of the NIMS by State, local, and tribal governments in order to meet the requirement established in HSPD-5.

Last Updated: Monday, 23-Aug-2004 12:46:44 EDT
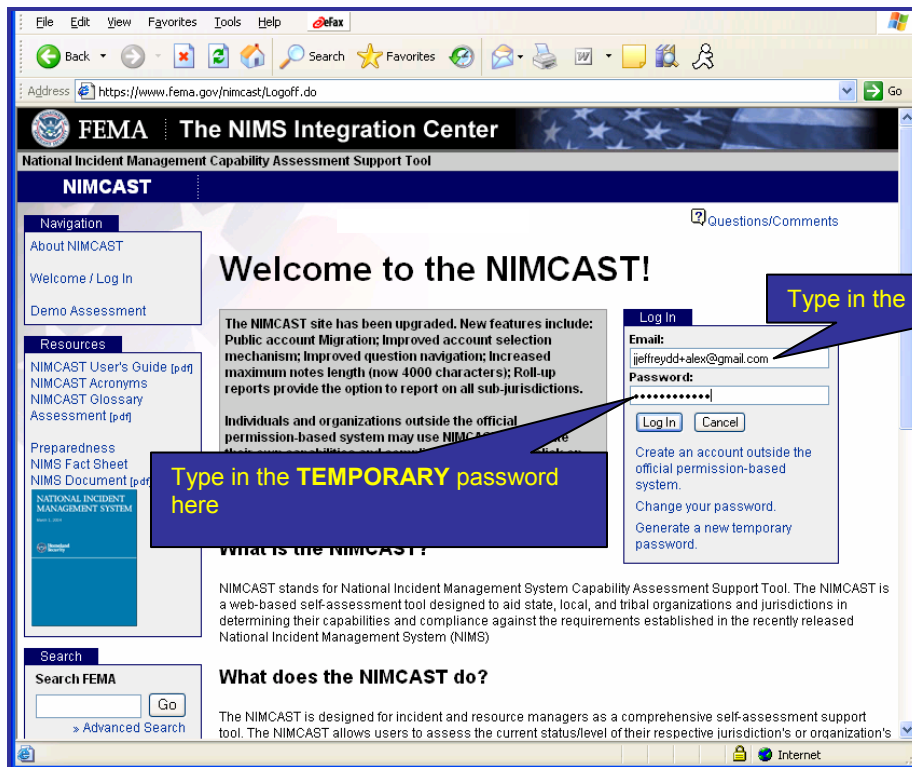
Password

Once you've been registered as a new user an email will be sent that contains a **temporary password** to the email address that was used in the New User registration.

Link to renew a temporary password

TEMPORARY password, valid for **24** hours
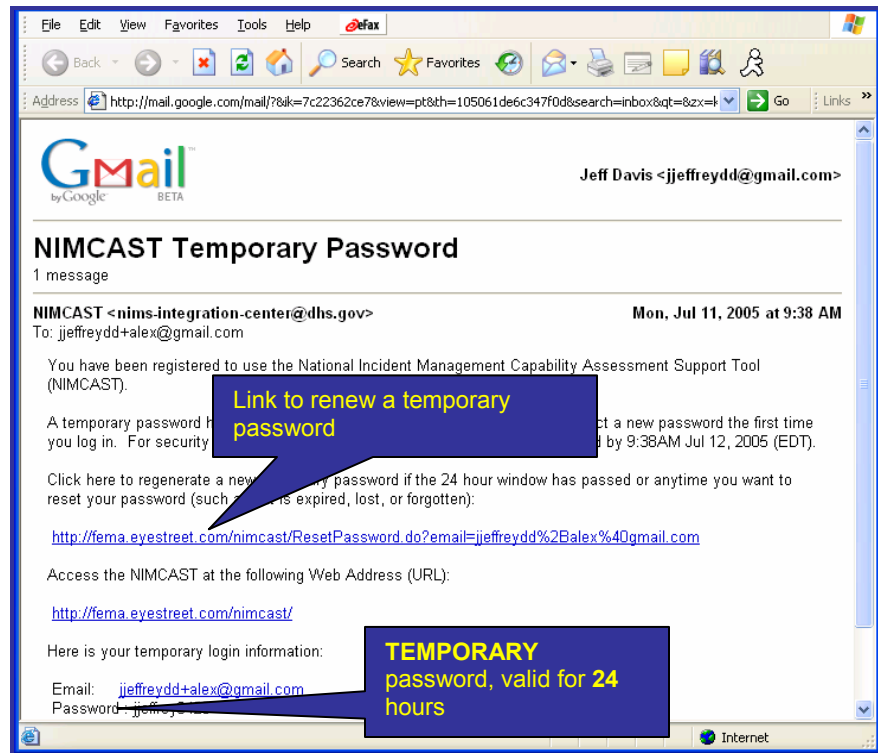
If it is less then 24 hours from the time that the email was sent, you can use the exact TEMPORARY login information at the bottom of the page to Log In for the first time at the NIMCAST Homepage

If your temporary password has expired, click on the link in the email to reset or renew your temporary password.

Type in the **YOUR** email address

Type in the **TEMPORARY** password here

Located at the bottom of **YOUR** email, type in the temporary password **EXACTLY AS IT APPEARS.**

Re-enter in the **TEMPORARY** password (the same one located at the bottom of your email and the one used at the Log In box at the NIMCAST Homepage) and select a new password that meets the strong password criteria listed below

When changing your password, create a password that contains at least one of each of the following:

- Lower case character (a-z)
- Upper case character (A-Z)
- Any special character (!@#$%^,etc...)
- Any digit (0-9)

Example: Football#66 or terUim%11 etc…

Select the "Change Password" button to accept the new password

The yellow message at the top of the page will indicate that your password has been changed. It is important to remember your new password. You will need to provide it each time you logon to use NIMCAST tool.

Message indicating password has been changed

Change Password
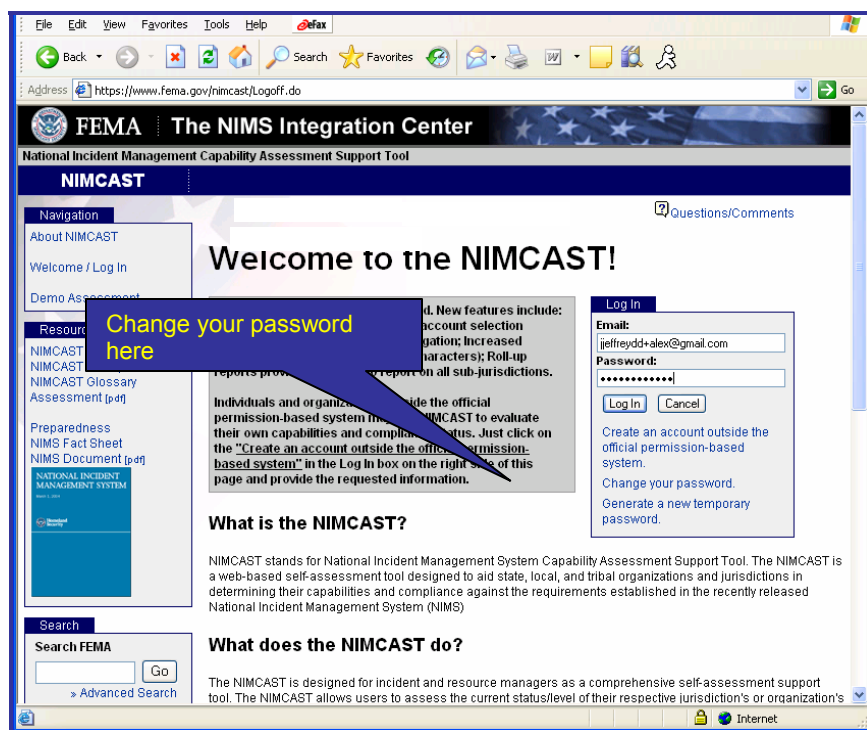
You can reset your password at any time. If you know your current password, select the Change your password link
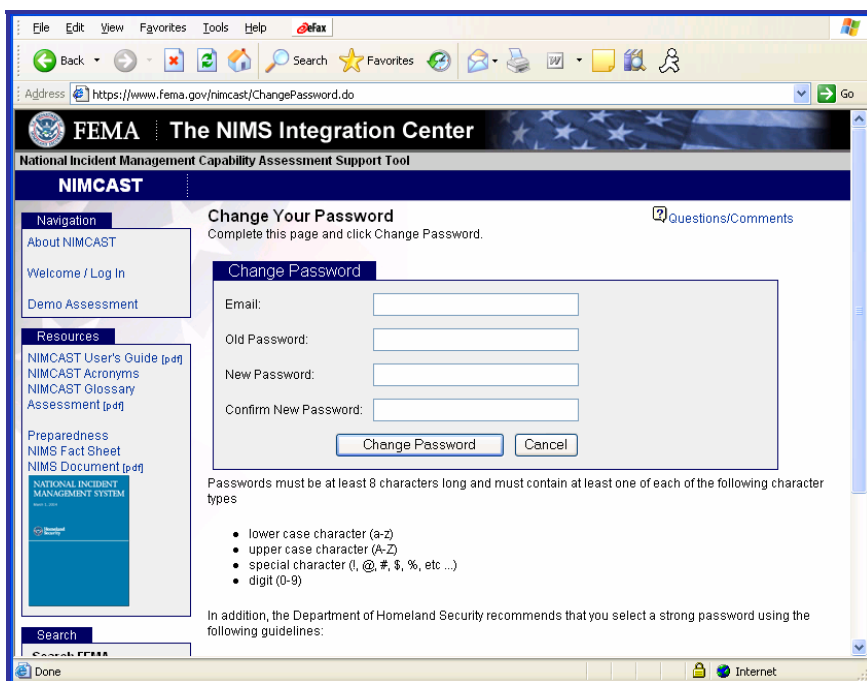
Lost or Forgotten Password

Lost/forgotten password? Generate a new temporary password here

If you are not sure what your current password is, select the Generate a new temporary password link. After you enter your email address, a new temporary password will be emailed to you. Your current password will no longer be valid.
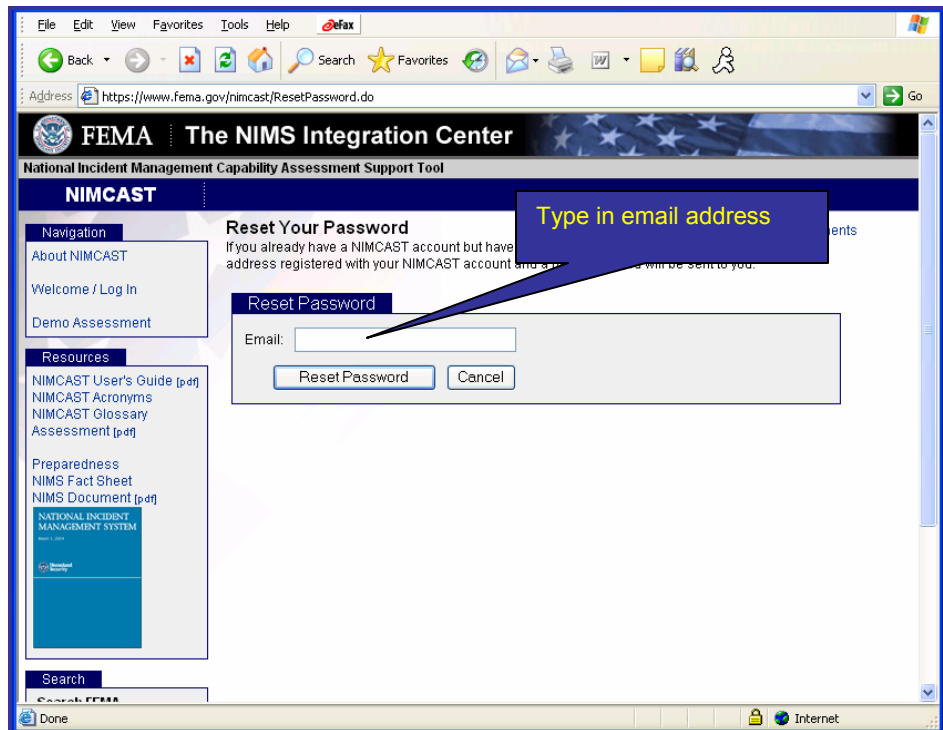
Type in email address

Assessment

The incident manager is responsible for collecting all feedback from those personnel tasked to provide input on the jurisdiction's incident management capabilities. Once all necessary information is gathered, the emergency manager must complete the online tool and submit the assessment for rollup.

Once you have logged in, you will see the assessment page:

The assessment currently encompasses Chapters II through VI of the NIMS document.

Click on the chapter you would like to complete.

Directions for completing the assessment are at the top of the page
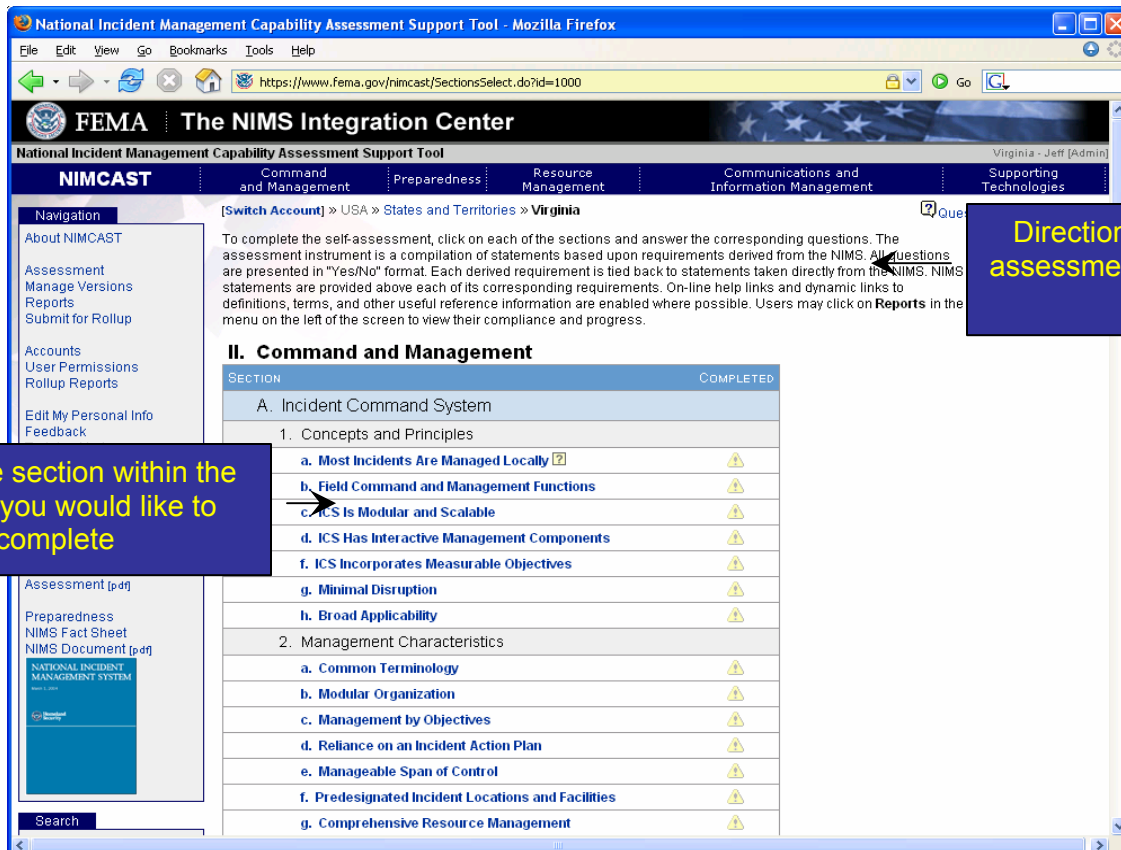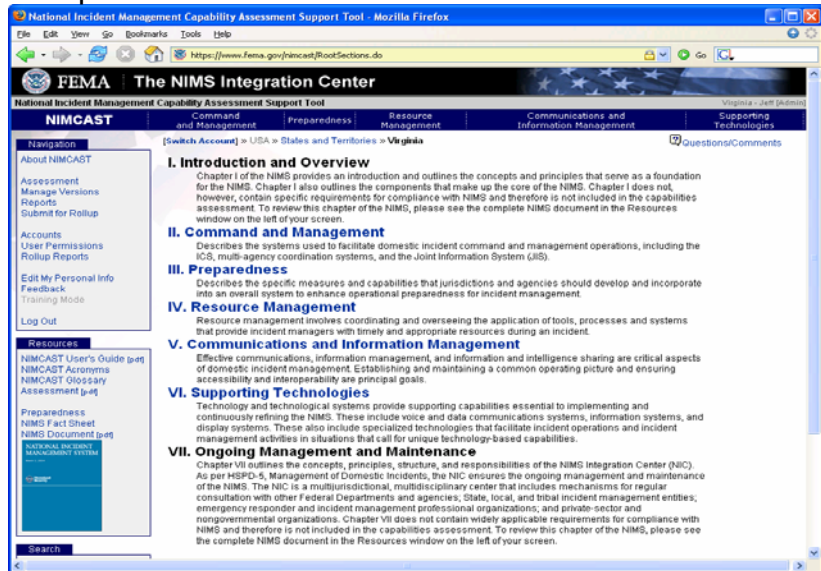
Select the section within the chapter you would like to complete

A box at the top of each section contains a specific NIMS reference. Each reference is taken verbatim from the NIMS document and its section and page number in the NIMS is annotated.

Below the reference area, there are capability assessment statements adopted directly from the NIMS reference. Note that some NIMS-derived compliance statements are broken down into several bulleted statements. Additionally, if a NIMS reference has multiple unique parts, each part may be addressed individually in separate statements; however, there is only one "YES/NO" question for each NIMS reference section.

The following steps illustrate how to fill out each section:

Users may voluntarily provide proof of compliance or a compliance strategy in the boxes at the bottom of the screen.

A boxed question mark: indicates a link to a related online resource. Highlighted text provides a link to the NIMCAST list of acronyms or the NIMCAST glossary:

Both the acronym list and the glossary can also be accessed through the links in the resources menu that appears on every page of the site:

Manage Versions

Managing versions allows the user to save up to six versions of the assessment, including a baseline version. When you first complete the entire assessment, you will be prompted to name the version. You can replace old versions with new ones and delete existing versions. However, this initial baseline version cannot be deleted.

Once you select Manage Versions from the Navigation window, the screen will display all versions of the assessment in your account:

Create New Version

	Title	Fiscal Year	Date
🔍	Baseline72604	2004	2004-07-26
🔍	(Current Assessment Data Set)	2004	2004-07-26

In order to create a new version, a baseline (initial) assessment must be completed. Otherwise, the user will receive the following error message when attempting to create a new version:

- **You must first rate all the questions in the assessment before you may create a baseline version.**

After completing a baseline version, you may wish to create a new version. You may do so by selecting Create New Version, located above the titles of any current versions. The following screen will appear:

Create a New Version.

Saving different versions of your jurisdiction's data allows you to gauge your program's progress over time in improving emergency preparedness and increasing compliance with the EMAP Standard.

Enter a name for the new version of the data set in the text box below. Then click **CREATE VERSION** to take a snapshot of the ...ntory.

...ons of your jurisdiction's data, including your baseline.

Type in the title of new version

Create Version

Title: _____

Select "Create Version"

Date: 2004-07-26

[Create Version] [Cancel]

You will receive the following message if your new version was successfully saved:

Version "VersionII72604" was successfully saved.

Once you have created multiple versions, you can utilize the Reports feature to compare them.

Reports

Viewing reports allows the user to check the progress on a current version and compare the current version to the baseline and other versions.

In order to view a report, select Reports from the Navigation window.

Submit for Rollup

The user should submit a completed version of the NIMCAST by using the Submit for Rollup link. Users roll up to the next highest account level. For instance, counties and independent cities roll up to States, and States then roll up to the Federal Government. Submitted versions cannot be changed.

After selecting Submit for Rollup from the Navigation toolbar, a pop-up window will appear:
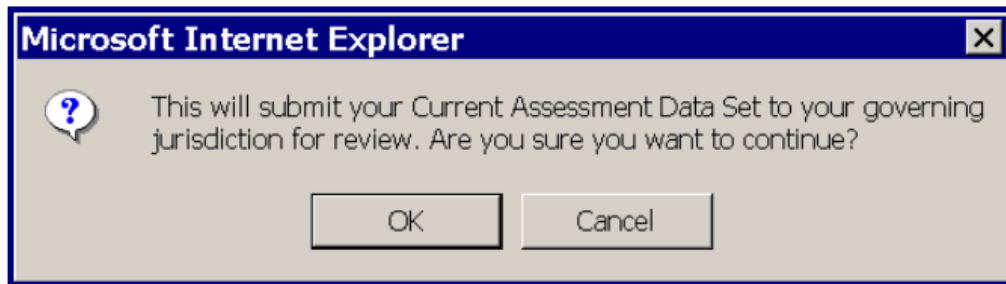
Select "OK" in the pop-up window if you are ready to continue. Please note that in order to submit an assessment for rollup, it must be completed in its entirety. Otherwise, the following error message will appear:

• **You must first rate all the questions in the assessment before you may submit your assessment for rollup.**

If this message appears, return to the assessment to fill out incomplete sections. If your attempt to submit a report for rollup was successful, the following message will appear:

Thank you. Your new records were successfully included with others from your governing jurisdiction. In addition, a Version was created that represents the most recent rollup submitted for the current fiscal year.

The submitted version will be automatically saved as Rollup Submittal:

Create New Version

	Title	Fiscal Year	Date	
	Baseline72604	2004	2004-07-26	
	VersionII72604	2004	2004-07-26	✗
	Rollup Submittal	2004	2004-07-26	
	(Current Assessment Data Set)	2004	2004-07-26	

Accounts

An account is established for each assessment jurisdiction. All assessment data is tied to the account, not the users. Even if a user is removed or reassigned, the data they entered remains in the system.

Accounts are organized in a hierarchical structure based on existing channels of Federal emergency preparedness funds. The following is an example of an accounts page. Each account under that jurisdictional level is itemized on this page.

If an account is entered in error, it can easily be removed by clicking on the red "X" to the right of the account, but once data has been saved in an account it can no longer be deleted.

Account Migration

Data from Public access accounts can be migrated into the Official, permission-based accounts for users who meet the following criteria:
1. have been invited to use the Official system
2. already have a public account
3. have data specific to their Official account saved in their Public account

Once a user has been granted access into the Official system, they will have two active NIMCAST accounts, one Public, one Official. If the user would like to transfer data from their Public account to their Official account, click on "Migrate My Account".
This feature is only available to users who meet the above criteria.
Once users select their target account for data migration, a pop-up box will appear to verify the action. Clicking "OK" will migrate data into the selected target account.
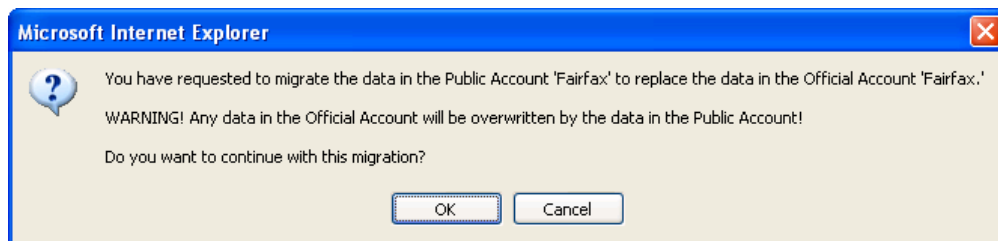
User Permissions

Users are identified by their e-mail address, which ensures there will be no overlap in usernames. Additionally, the e-mail address provides a secure method to communicate with the user for purposes such as resetting their password.

The administrator of an account establishes the relationship of each user to the account; the administrator will assign one of the following permission levels (listed with their capabilities) to each user:

Read-only
- View assessment responses via reporting tools

Standard
- Save/Edit responses to survey questions

Administrator
- Determine (Add, Edit, Delete) users' permissions to access the account
- Create accounts below current level
- Submit the assessment for rollup to the next level
- Manage baselines

The only exception to this separation of capabilities is when an administrator of a parent account has "inherited" administration permission on sub-accounts. At this time, the administrator can assign, edit, and/or delete users to the new account. However, the administrator cannot fill in the assessment or submit it for rollup.

The user permissions page displays the users, their contact information, organization, and permission type for every user on that particular account:

If you are an administrator, perform the following steps to assign permissions to users under your purview:

After selecting the appropriate account from the Accounts page, click on User Permissions in the Navigation window.

This selection will take you to the following page:

Enter the user's e-mail address and select the permission type that you are granting

Select the "Next" button

If the e-mail address entered belongs to a user already in the database, the user will then be assigned an account. If not, you will be asked to enter the user's personal information on this page:

Provide contact information for the user

Select the "Register" button

The user will get an e-mail with a temporary password.

If a user is created in error or entered incorrectly, they are easily deleted by clicking on the red "X" to the right of the users name and personal information. This function is useful for situations where users have been added to the wrong account. Users can only be deleted by Admin level users.

Rollup Reports

Once one or more users under your jurisdiction have submitted reports for rollup, you can utilize the Rollup Reports feature to view and compare assessments from these sub-accounts.

Edit My Personal Info

This screen allows the user to ensure the accuracy of their contact information and change it if necessary. It is a good idea to visit this page the first time you enter the site to ensure your administrator entered all of your personal information correctly.

Feedback

After completing the NIMCAST, users are encouraged to fill out the feedback form accessible from the Navigation toolbar. Please note the form includes space for additional comment. Users are encouraged to share any relevant feedback not covered in the existing form.

Once submitted, the form is sent to the NIMS Integration Center. Providing feedback gives users the opportunity to participate in the continual improvement of the NIMCAST. Feedback will be reviewed frequently and incorporated into the regularly scheduled revisions of the NIMCAST.

Navigation
About NIMCAST

Assessment
Manage Versions
Reports
Submit for Rollup

Accounts
User Permissions
Rollup Reports

Edit My Personal Info
Feedback

Log Out

Log Out

It is important to log out after each session to ensure the security of your account. To log out, click the Log Out button in the Navigation window. You will be automatically transferred to the NIMCAST introduction screen. A yellow box at the top of the page will indicate that your log out was successful.